

Eastern CT Veterans Community Center



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Date: March 5, 2022
To: Committee on Veterans' Affairs
From: Eastern CT Veterans Community Center, Windham Region Veterans Coffeehouse
Re: SB 338

To Whom It May Concern:

The Eastern CT Veterans Community Center was opened in June of 2022 because of the need for improving the information and services provided to veterans in rural Eastern CT. In the last seven months we have grown in size to represent almost 800 veterans serving our country from WWII to Afghanistan and today. During our weekly coffeehouse meetings we discuss proposed bills, unmet needs of veterans and considerations to improve their health and well-being. It is with this support of so many voices that we submit our support for SB 338, An Act Concerning A Study of Municipal Veterans' Services.

We have been working with municipal veterans' representatives and advocates throughout the state and more closely in Eastern CT for several years, including virtual meetings, social media posts and newsletters. It is evident that some communities have embraced the intent of the CT General Statutes that created these positions and have the proper resources to make them effective in serving their veteran citizens. But it is also evident that many municipalities do not have the financial and staff/volunteer resources to properly meet the requirements of the law. Veterans should receive information, assistance and support equally across all towns regardless of their population density, income or location.

For those municipal veterans' representatives that are currently actively working with veterans, it is imperative that they receive proper training and updates from the VA so that they can deliver the best possible service to their communities. We believe this study will provide the VA with information that can be used as a basis for improved communication and interaction with each municipal veterans' representative.

The Eastern CT Veterans Community Center and the Windham Region Veterans Coffeehouse, with 800 veteran voices, support SB 338 An Act Concerning A Study of Municipal Veterans Services and we encourage the Committee on Veterans Affairs to strongly consider this much needed study. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Diane Nadeau
President/CEO, Windham Region Chamber of Commerce
Executive Director, Eastern CT Veterans Community Center &
Windham Region Veterans Coffeehouse